

Madame Chair and members of the committee, my name is Marissa Stockton and I reside in Helena and I am in opposition of SB 300.

Today, we have heard stories of people being saved by seat belts or it could be that their lives were saved by the air bags, but we don't know for sure. But what I do know is that seat belts can also cause deaths. Following are some stories of where seat belts took lives.

"A California mother and her children were driving through a storm when her car went off the road and into a ditch. The older kids got out and went to safety, but while the mother tried to unbuckle the infant, they were struck by another car. The mother lived and may even walk again some day. The baby didn't make it.

Another California mother was taking her car-pool children to school on a mountain road some years back. Her baby, in the back of her van, started choking. There was no place to pull over and she panicked, trying to see what was wrong with the baby and still drive. We know this because one of the children lived long enough to tell the highway patrol officer what happened. Suppose the baby had been in the front seat where the mom had access?

Wes and Amber were teenagers from a small Nevada town. When she lost control of the car, she was ejected and killed. Wes was buckled in tightly and died on impact.

Jami and Kathy were both wearing seat belts, too. Jami was driving and died when the car lost traction and went over a short cliff. Kathy was severely injured.

David was belted in when he had a wreck. The seat belt gave so much he was nearly killed by slamming into the steering wheel. Then it snapped tight and trapped him in the car. He survived but had the car caught fire, he wouldn't have. The belt had to be cut.

The point is that seat belts don't always save lives. Imagine if your car goes into a body of water or catches fire? How much time do you really have to rescue small children belted far behind you?"

Please vote "NO on SB 300.

Thank you.

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